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NBC, Post Accused of FBI Vendetta

Associated Press

The National Broadcasting Co. and The Washington Post were accused yesterday by Rep. John J. Rooney of being "part of the swirling vendetta against the FBI and its respected director, J. Edgar Hoover."

Rooney, a New York Democrat and long-time defender of the FBI and Hoover, is chairman of a House appropriations subcommittee which processes the FBI budget.

His criticism of NBC was based on a recent program "First Tuesday." His jibe at The Washington Post was based on what Rooney called "a subsequent rehash of that distorted program," in a three-part series by reporter Walter Pincus. Rooney described Pincus as the consultant for the NBC program.

Rooney himself was interviewed as part of the FBI segment of the "First Tuesday" program aired June 1.

NBC said it would have no comment on his remarks.

Eugene C. Patterson, managing editor of the Post, said the paper would have no comment on Rooney's speech. "The stories speak for themselves," he said.

Rooney claimed the Pincus articles "grossly maligned" his appropriations subcommittee by suggesting it gives the FBI preferential treatment and implying that it ignores its responsibility to hold the FBI "strictly accountable" for its appropriations.

He called the articles a "shoddy substitution of sensation for journalism" and a compilation of innuendo, half-truths, distortions and downright sloppy investigation."

While the appropriations committee borrows heavily from the FBI for personnel for its surveys and investigations staff, Rooney said, the staff "has never been requested to conduct any studies directly involving an appropriation request of the FBI."